

INSPECTION REPORT

Al Rashid Al Saleh Private School

Report published in April 2014

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT Al Rashid Al Saleh Private School

Location	Oud Metha
Type of school	Private
Website	www.alrashed-alsaleh.com
Telephone	043376126
Address	Oud Metha, um Hurair.O Box 4458Dubai
Principal	Sister Samira Ayoub Botrus
Curriculum	MoE
Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age / Grades or Year Groups	4-19 / KG 1 to Grade 12
Attendance	Outstanding
Number of students on roll	2508
Largest nationality group of Students	Arab
Number of Emirati students	246 (10%)
Date of the inspection	10th March to 13th March 2014

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The context of the school

Al Rashid Al Saleh Private School is a non-profit school, located in Oud Metha, Dubai. It was established in 1971. At the time of the inspection, the school had 2,508 students, aged 4 to 19 years. The school segregated boys' and girls' classes starting in Grade 4. The students were distributed as follows: 10 percent in the Kindergarten, 40 percent in cycle 1, 31 percent in cycle 2, and 19 percent in cycle 3. Students from Arab nationalities made up most of the student population. The school had 246 Emirati students across various phases which is 10% of the student population. The school employed 2 education and development advisors, 144 teachers, and other specialist staff, most of whom had appropriate qualifications. The principal had been in post for more than 30 years. The school delivered the UAE Ministry of Education (MoE) curriculum, and students sat MoE examinations on a trimester basis. The language of instruction was Arabic. English was taught as an additional language for all students across all phases.

The school had identified 18 students with special educational needs (SEN) which involved a learning difficulty. It also provided a long list of students with medical conditions. There were a large number of gifted and talented students identified by the school. The school had 3 specialist counsellors who collaborated with teachers in identifying and supporting students with special educational needs. There were no qualified specialist teachers in this department.

Overall school performance 2013-2014

Good

Key strengths

- The caring ethos in the school;
- The good leadership which had improved performance and outcomes;
- The good attainment and progress in all key subjects across most phases;
- The outstanding personal responsibility shown by students across all phases, and their excellent community and environmental responsibility in the two upper cycles;
- The outstanding provision for student health and safety across all phases.

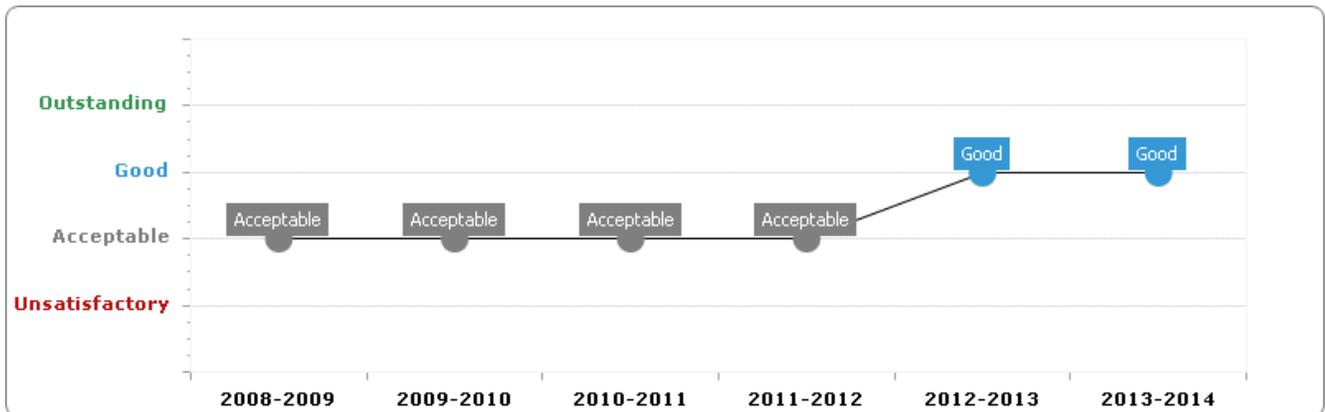
Recommendations

- Improve outcomes in the Kindergarten by:
 - Strengthening the leadership and management in that cycle;
 - Ensuring that curriculum plans include specific learning intentions;
 - Planning and implementing lessons that fully engage children.
- Assess students' performance against international standards, and identify strengths and weaknesses to ensure teaching better meets the individual needs of all students;
- Improve the curriculum design to support the development of various groups of students and to provide broader curricular choices;
- Improve the identification of and the support for students with special educational needs by providing expert training for all teachers.

Progress since the last inspection

- Students had good levels of performance in almost all key subjects. In mathematics, attainment and progress of both the Kindergarten and cycle 1 students had improved and was now good.
- Attainment in Islamic Education and progress in Arabic as a first language in the Kindergarten had improved and was good. Progress in science in the Kindergarten had decreased to acceptable.
- In the first three phases of the school students' attitudes and behaviour improved to outstanding, as did community and environmental responsibility in cycle 2.
- There was a significantly higher percentage of good or better teaching than in the previous inspection. Teaching was better in the Kindergarten. The curriculum in cycle 1 had improved and was good.
- There were better identification and support practices for students with special educational needs in the school; however, these were not yet well-established.
- Better quality of support was noted in the Kindergarten, and the quality of leadership and the school's self-evaluation and improvement planning were more effective as reflected in the improved performance of the school.

Trend of overall performance



How good are the students' attainment progress and learning skills?

	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Islamic Education				
Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Good
Progress	Good	Good	Good	Good
Arabic as a first language				
Attainment	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good
Progress	Good	Good	Good	Good
Arabic as an additional language				
Attainment	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Progress	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
English				
Attainment	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good
Progress	Acceptable	Good	Good	Outstanding
Mathematics				
Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Good
Progress	Good	Good	Good	Good
Science				
Attainment	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good
Progress	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Quality of students' learning skills	Good	Good	Good	Good

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How good is the students' personal and social development?

	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Personal responsibility	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Students' understanding of Islamic values and their local, cultural and global awareness	Good	Good	Good	Good
Community and environmental responsibility	Good	Good	Outstanding	Outstanding

[Read paragraph](#)

How good are teaching and assessment?

	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How well does the curriculum meet the educational needs of all students?

	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Curriculum quality	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good
Curriculum design to meet the individual needs of students	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Health and Safety	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Quality of Support	Good	Good	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

	Whole school
Quality of leadership	Good
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Good
Parents and the community	Good
Governance	Good
Management, including staffing, facilities and resources	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How good are the students' attainment and progress?

Attainment was generally good in all key subjects and cycles across the school except in KG where attainment was acceptable in Arabic as a first language, English and science. In Islamic education, in cycle 1, students showed strong knowledge of the five pillars of Islam and were able to link them to their daily life. By cycle 3, students used evidence from the Holy Quran and Hadith to show how Islam emphasised the importance of a healthy life style. Holy Quran recitation and memorisation skills were within the expected levels across the school. Students of Arabic as a first language had well developed listening comprehension skills. Their ability to construct oral responses, using accurate and confident standard Arabic particularly in middle and upper grades, was good. The majority of students' reading comprehension was above expectations. Kindergarten children could shape, decode and pronounce Arabic script to an acceptable level but their listening and speaking skills were strong. In English, students' speaking was weaker in the Kindergarten but showed considerable skill and increasing fluency and precision throughout cycles 1 to 3. Students' stories and essays were generally accurate, but with weaknesses in spelling and punctuation. Attainment in mathematics was good across the school. Children in the Kindergarten could sequence numbers well beyond 20. By the end of cycle 1, students were conversant with a range of geometric constructions. Cycle 2 and particularly cycle 3 students showed a confidence in most aspects of mathematics. In science, attainment was acceptable in the Kindergarten and good in all other phases. Students in cycle 1 had the strongest attainment but it was highly focussed on factual recall. Students in all phases did not have sufficient skill in handling scientific apparatus when investigating.

Progress mostly mirrored that of attainment in all key subjects and phases, the exceptions being English in cycle 3 which was outstanding and Arabic as a first language in KG which was good. In Islamic Education, most students made good progress overall. Students in cycle 1 improved their understanding of the meaning of the Judgment Day. Students, particularly in cycles 1 and 2 were making steady progress in the Holy Quran recitation. Most students made good progress in all aspects of Arabic as a first language. The best progress was made in developing oral and listening comprehension skills across all phases. Reading and writing skills were developing well, although this happened at a relatively slower pace in the Kindergarten. In English, children in the Kindergarten had progressed well in listening and reading, but more slowly in speaking and writing. Older students' outstanding progress in speaking also supported their progress in creative and discursive writing. In mathematics, progress was good across the school. Students developed their mathematical skills well through cycle 1 and this continued through to cycle 3. Progress in science was acceptable in the Kindergarten and good in all other phases.

[View judgements](#)

Quality of students' learning skills

Students' learning skills throughout the school were good, with strengths among older students in cycle 3. Almost without exception, children and students learned responsibly, when given the opportunity to do so. In cycle 3 particularly, such co-operation often involved critical thinking. Throughout the school, children and students made strong learning links to real life situations. The Kindergarten children role-played real jobs, and older students in cycle 3 debated topical social issues. In cycles 2 and 3, students used the Internet independently to research in lessons. Project-based learning helped students to link their learning to other subjects. In Kindergarten, students' learning skills in English and science were less well developed. Only in cycle 3 were students more strongly aware of their own strengths as learners, and what they needed to do to improve.

How good is the students' personal and social development?

Students' personal responsibility was outstanding across the school. Children entered the Kindergarten smiling and eager, and sustained their enthusiasm throughout the day. Across the school, students were consistently keen to learn, and attend school which was reflected in their outstanding rates of attendance. Relationships between adults and students were exemplary. Students clearly felt valued and they co-operated very well with one another. Older students supported younger ones as a matter of course. Students had a good understanding of the benefits of a healthy life style which was reflected in their food choices and their enthusiasm for physical exercise.

Most students exhibited a good level of understanding of Islamic values and their influence on the lives of the residents of Dubai. They appreciated the values of tolerance and compassion and cited many examples of how this was reflected in Dubai society. Students had an excellent knowledge of the UAE culture and heritage and made interesting comparisons between past and present traditions and lifestyles in Dubai. They showed great pride in their own culture and had a good awareness of and respect for others' cultures, particularly in cycle 3.

Students' community and environmental responsibility was good in the Kindergarten and cycle 1 and outstanding in cycles 2 and 3. Students tried hard to succeed and were mutually supportive. They actively contributed to the daily life of the school. The school council had influenced improvements in Internet access and created a social media site. Topics included looking after the environment and keeping safe. Students played leading roles and willingly performed in the vibrant and uplifting daily assemblies. Other initiatives

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led by students included support for local charities and re-cycling schemes. They had a very secure awareness of environmental issues. The school effectively exhibited wide-ranging practical and decorative artefacts that students from Grade 3 upwards had created using re-cycled materials.

[View judgements](#)

How good are teaching and assessment?

Teaching in the key subjects was acceptable in the Kindergarten and good in the rest of the school. Throughout cycles 1 to 3 teachers knew their subjects well and planned motivating activities. In the best lessons there was minimal teacher talk, which created more time for students to learn through practical activity. In the Kindergarten in science and English, teachers did not yet do this effectively. In most lessons throughout the school, teachers did not rely solely on the textbook, but often used ICT, for example to provide interesting 'starters' in science. In the Kindergarten, teachers also used suitable visual aids and 'props' to engage children's interest. In some subjects, such as Islamic Education, questioning skilfully extended students' thinking. This was not consistent across all subjects and cycles. Teachers planned well to include critical thinking in lessons particularly in cycles 2 and 3. Across the school, teaching approaches did not consistently meet students' learning needs. The quality of teaching in other subjects, such as computing and social subjects, was good.

Assessment was acceptable in the Kindergarten, cycles 1 and 2 and good in cycle 3. Assessment systems were improving. Recent initiatives included the introduction of termly diagnostic tests. However, assessment benchmarks remained unrealistically high and were not aligned to international standards. In the Kindergarten the focus of the new daily assessments were not always clear. A few teachers were using more challenging questions from international tests to give a more realistic view of attainment and progress. Regular testing adequately informed teachers of the strengths and weaknesses of their students and the school was beginning to analyse individual student performance in more detail. Assessment was stronger in cycle 3 because teachers provided a more detailed analysis of how to improve. In other phases, books were regularly marked for accuracy, but teachers rarely wrote informative feedback. Teachers in mathematics and English had used assessment to identify weaknesses and were beginning to use this information to modify the curriculum, but there was little evidence of assessment being used by teachers to modify their lessons.

[View judgements](#)

How well does the curriculum meet the educational needs of all students?

The quality of the curriculum was acceptable in the Kindergarten and good across cycles 1 to 3. The curriculum in the Kindergarten had developed to include cross-curricular links. Curriculum plans, were specific

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about what children were to do, but not about what they were intended to learn. Planning closely followed the MoE curriculum which helped to ensure that students built up their knowledge and understanding progressively through the school. There were some examples of students' researching independently, particularly as they pursued individual projects. However, opportunities to find things out for themselves, to think deeply and to come to their own conclusions during day-to-day lessons were more limited. An innovative programme for Year 12 students helped them to reflect on their individual skills, attributes and ambitions when considering whether to apply for university or to seek employment. Modern technology was an increasing feature across the curriculum, including the use of tablet computers throughout Grades 6 to 9. Some effective cross curricular links, for example between biology and physical education, enhanced students' learning, though there were missed opportunities for students to practise and consolidate their numeracy skills in other subjects. There were a few regular extra-curricular activities. Students took part in exhibitions and events, such as a British Council art workshop and spelling and music competitions.

The design of the curriculum to meet the individual needs of students was acceptable across all phases. The curriculum met the learning needs of most students. In order to engage Emirati students further, additional opportunities were provided for them to follow their own interests. Students' choice in cycle 3 was limited to two main options; the 'arts' or the 'sciences' programme. When planning, teachers generally kept in mind the needs of the most able and those needing additional support. However, there was little flexibility to allow students to learn in their own ways and at their own speeds. Curriculum plans, were not specific about how the curriculum might be modified, for example, to ensure that the most able students were sufficiently challenged. Plans did not indicate how expectations could be adjusted to enable students with special educational needs to make better progress from their individual starting points.

[View judgements](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

Procedures to ensure the health, safety and protection of students were outstanding. The school buildings were well maintained and kept scrupulously clean. The school had established appropriate systems to deal with students' health. School bus arrivals and departures were organised with military precision. Students were extremely well supervised during breaks. There was a staff presence in corridors at all times throughout the day. Students were escorted from their classrooms to specialist rooms or to the sports facilities outside. Most students made healthy choices for eating. Staff had received training in child protection and were aware of the policy and procedures to follow. Students' awareness of child protection issues was reinforced through assemblies and through interventions by the school doctor. The school had developed an e-safety policy. It dealt quickly with potential hazards.

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The quality of support was good throughout the school. The interactions between staff and students in lessons and around the school showed how much mutual respect they had for one another. Students appreciated the care and concern that all staff demonstrated for their well-being. The good procedures to manage attendance and punctuality were effective as attendance was high and punctuality had improved. The school had a well-structured behaviour management policy. Students had the benefit of a team of counsellors to help and support them with their academic and personal development. They could get advice from a range of staff whom they knew and trusted. There had been improvements in the support given to students with special educational needs but developments were at an early stage.

[View judgements](#)

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

The quality of leadership was good. Senior leaders demonstrated strong commitment to improvement. They had set a clear vision and direction for continuous development, and had effectively communicated these to all staff and to major stakeholders. Most school leaders at all levels worked as a cohesive group of professionals with well-set strategic goals. They had sustained good performance overall, with some evident improvement. Middle managers made a good contribution to school leadership. However, they had not yet succeeded in raising the school's and students' performance to higher levels especially in the Kindergarten. Leadership roles and responsibilities were well defined and communication systems between all layers of leadership and with other stakeholders were effective.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning were good. The school had established good systems and processes for self-evaluation. Teams, with clear roles and responsibilities in measuring the school's performance against inspection quality indicators, had been formed across the school. Leaders ensured that the views of parents, students and staff were incorporated into the improvement planning process through a variety of surveys. The school had a good performance management system that was well-linked to professional expectations. Through observation and continuous monitoring, leaders had identified teachers' strengths and targeted areas for professional development. It had provided some effective internal and external training. The school had produced good quality plans to address previous inspection recommendations and findings from their self-evaluation. It had made some progress in addressing some of the recommendations of the previous inspection, however, the results were not yet evident. Though the senior leaders were well aware of the challenges in the Kindergarten, they had not yet implemented effective measures to raise standards in this phase.

Partnership with parents and the community was good. Parents were productively involved in many aspects of the life and work of the school. The school respected their opinions and suggestions. Communications

were appropriate. Parents felt that they could be more fully informed about how their children could improve. International links were developing.

Governance was good. The Board had a broad representation which comprised members of various backgrounds and fields of expertise. The Board was aware of the school's major challenges and priorities. However, the governors' understanding of the educational aspects presented in the inspection recommendations was not secure. The Board met monthly with a clear agenda of school development. They provided appropriate support to the school by attending lessons, reviewing school plans, and suggesting improvements. They regularly monitored progress including students' academic results. The Board met twice a year with parents and students to listen to their ideas and to address any developing concerns.

Management including staffing, facilities and resources was good. Timetabling was generally efficient in all phases except in the Kindergarten. Teachers generally arrived promptly to class and little time was lost between lessons. Students respected the routines which kept the school running smoothly. Most teachers had appropriate qualifications. The school organised a well-balanced induction programme and specific training based on an analysis of needs. The school buildings provided a good environment for learning. There were limited facilities for outdoor sports. The school was adequately resourced, but the science laboratories were underused. Older students made some good use of ICT to support their learning.

[View judgements](#)

How well does the school provide for Emirati students?

There were 246 Emirati students, about 10% of student body, in the school. Their attainment and progress were good in all key subjects. Their attitudes and behaviour were outstanding. They had a strong sense of responsibility. The curriculum provided them with a good basis for the study of core subjects. A range of activities had also been provided to enrich the curriculum in most subjects. Some Emirati students were seen as an under-performing group and they were given some positive support which had resulted in improvements in attainment. The school had good links with the parents of Emirati students and met them regularly. An Emirati parent held the post of chairman of the parent advisory committee.

How well does the school provide for students with special educational needs?

The progress of students with special educational needs was good in all key subjects with the exception of Islamic Education, where it was acceptable. There was a developing system for the Identification of these students. The school had appointed three staff with the responsibility for identification and support of those with particular needs. Whilst they were well qualified, they did not have specific qualifications in the teaching

of special educational needs students. However, the total number identified with needs across the school remained low. The process of identification was sound, but relied on teachers to highlight concerns before further action was taken. Once identified the school did not have the expertise to confirm the category and relied upon external support to establish the specific need. Once the initial school process had occurred and parents accepted the school's diagnosis, they were fully involved in the planning of the support. The quality of provision in lessons was inconsistent, as were the adjustments made in order to meet the individual needs. Most teachers knew the needs of the students in their classes and had access to relevant parts of the individual education plans. Although the curriculum was not modified to meet specific needs, the students were tracked and most teachers planned for and provided some form of support, based on the information available to them.

How well does the school teach Arabic as a first language?

Teaching in Arabic as a first language was strong across all phases of the school. Teachers' subject knowledge was secure, and they modelled good language in almost all classes. Lessons had a clear structure and learning objectives were often shared effectively. Learning was, in many cases, led by teachers with students showing high levels of interest and good response to their teachers' well-phrased and well-timed questions. Resources including ICT were adequately used. Opportunities for students to learn independently, including unguided reading, were less frequent. The success criteria which teachers used to assess students' achievement and their understanding, at the end of lessons, were sometimes limited. The school followed the UAE Ministry of Education curriculum which was well aligned to its standards and expectations. It was enhanced and enriched by additional resources and school initiatives across the different phases. In planning, opportunities for independent student work in reading and extended writing were limited compared to listening and oral work.

What are the views of parents, teachers and students?

Before the inspection, the views of parents, teachers and senior secondary students were surveyed. Key messages from each group were considered during the inspection and these helped to form judgements. A summary of the survey statistics and comments from those who responded to the survey follows:

Responses to the surveys			
Responses received	Number		Percentage
Parents	This year	238	18%
	Last year	318	24%
Teachers	62		45%
Students	109		23%

*The percentage of responses from parents is based on the number of families.

A minority of parents responded to this year's survey, a lower percentage than the previous year. Almost all the parents considered that their children were receiving a good education. The majority were content with progress in English and most were satisfied with progress in Islamic Education, Arabic, mathematics and science. All thought that their children had a good knowledge of Islam. Most felt that their children enjoyed school, and virtually all thought that their children were safe. A few, however, expressed concerns about safety on school buses, and about the school's ability to deal with bullying. Nearly a fifth indicated that teachers' written comments were not helpful enough in helping the students to improve and about the same number felt that time spent on homework was inappropriate. Almost all thought that the school was well led, but only a majority considered that leaders listened to their opinions. Almost half were unaware of the school's performance in international assessments. Students were very positive. Most thought that they were making good progress in all their subjects. Almost a quarter did not think that behaviour was good. Most felt that teachers' comments and suggestions were helpful. Almost half were dissatisfied with the extra-curricular activities. Most felt safe in school and on the buses. Teachers were overwhelmingly positive in their responses. However, about half were unsure about the school's performance with regard to international comparisons.

What happens next?

The school has been asked to prepare and submit an updated action plan to DSIB within two months of receiving the most recent report. This plan should address:

- Recommendations from DSIB;
- Areas identified by the school as requiring improvement;
- Other external reports or sources of information that comment on the work of the school;
- Priorities arising from the school's unique characteristics.

The next inspection will report on the progress made by the school.

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau

Knowledge and Human Development Authority

How to contact us

If you have a concern or wish to comment on any aspect of this report you should contact:
inspection@khda.gov.ae

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